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Toronto metro

Your essential daily news | THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2015 | High 13°C/Low 4°C Cloudy

The *Heart* of Christmas

You don't have to be religious to understand the true meaning of the holidays. It's really just about good manners. Merry Christmas from everyone at Metro. XO!

Heartfelt advice from our etiquette expert Ellen Vanstone

metroVIEWS

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metro NEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, December 24, 2015

Dear readers,
Metro is not publishing on Christmas Day, but look for our special Time Capsule edition on Dec. 26.

Clearing a new winter cycling path

TRANSPORTATION

City earmarks new funds for seasonal bike lane services

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Assuming snow finally does fall, many Toronto cyclists will likely find a smoother ride than in years past.

The city has earmarked $650,000 for clearing bike lanes — and will give extra attention to areas that have previously gone, for the most part, untouched. That includes routes along St. George/Beverly, Harbour, College, Gerrard, River, Shuter, the Bloor Viaduct, Strachan, Lower Simcoe and lower Yonge.

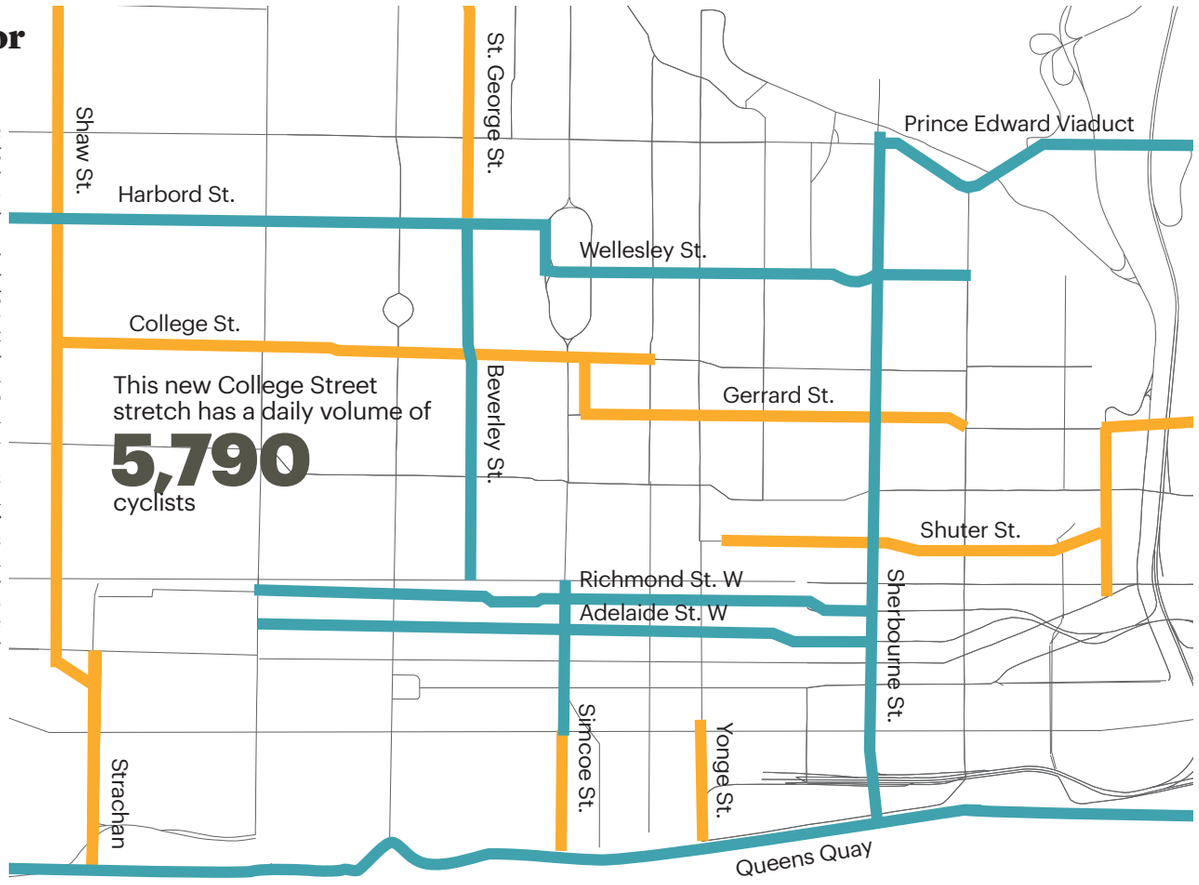
The goal is to achieve "bare pavement" conditions for bike lanes during the winter months, said Trevor Tenn, the Toronto's manager of road operations.

That means aggressive plowing and salting along with new signs to indicate which streets cyclists should use after a snowstorm.

Cyclists have long decried poor biking conditions in winter, saying snow is actually piled onto bike lanes when plows hit the streets. The freeze-thaw cycle — coupled with a lack of salt — also makes bike lanes hard to use during the cold months.

A report by the city's transportation services in 2009 showed about 10 per cent of Toronto cyclists continue to bike through the winter. Better clearance of bike lanes, paths and streets was key to see the number grow, the report noted.

A scene from seasons past along College Street.
COURTESY OF HAMISH WILSON



Cleaning up the streets

Toronto has pledged new support to improve the poor biking conditions in the winter months. One of the lanes to be maintained runs along College Street from Shaw to Sherbourne Street, and is home to a daily volume of 5,790 bike riders.

- Cycle tracks already being cleared/serviced
- Cycle tracks being added to service routes

SPORTS

Green is the new white as golfers head out for Christmas

Canadians deprived of a white Christmas this year can celebrate on the greens instead.

Balmy breezes and soaring temperatures across parts of central and eastern Canada have prompted some golf courses to stay open through the holiday.

Based on early bookings, Canadians are planning to take advantage, viewing a December day on the links as a rare opportunity and an early Christmas gift.

Golf courses planning to stay open through the festive season report that they're fully booked and even have long waiting lists in place for Christmas Eve, normally a day when the greens are long out of commission.

El Nino conditions are causing unusually high temperatures on the East Coast while western regions are largely blanketed in snow.

Environment Canada is calling for a daytime high of 16C on Christmas Eve, temperatures that at least one golf club supervisor cannot recall seeing for years.

Matt Duench of Waterloo, Ont. has been energized by the exciting possibility of a yuletide golf game.

The 36-year-old marketing professional said he's in the process of rearranging his Christmas Eve schedule to allow him to both fulfil holiday family obligations and get some time in with friends on his local golf course.

"Just a few weeks ago I kind of made the choice, begrudgingly, to swap out my golf clubs in my trunk for my snowboard," he said. "I've kind of been thinking that maybe I should go back the other way."

Based on booking numbers at the Lionhead Golf Course in Brampton, Ont., he's not alone.

Associate golf professional Trevor Brodie said about 230 people have already scheduled tee-off times for Christmas Eve, adding he fully expects the remaining handful of spots to be snapped up by day's end on Wednesday.

People hoping to get in a game on Christmas Day are out of luck, however, as Lionhead will be closed to allow staff some holiday time. THE CANADIAN PRESS, -WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mike Crawford watches his tee shot at Lionhead in Brampton on Wednesday.
NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Machete attack in downtown

CRIME

Assault near Eaton Centre appeared unprovoked

A man was taken to hospital with serious injuries and another man is in custody after a machete attack near the Eaton Centre early Wednesday evening.

Police were called to Bay and Dundas streets just after 4:30 p.m. and arrested a 35-year-old man and confiscated a machete and a large hunting knife, said 52 Division Staff Sgt. Winston Bennett. The assault appeared to be unprovoked.

Police said the victim incurred cuts to his head and leg but was expected to make a full recovery.

The suspect has reportedly been charged with attempted murder, aggravated assault, assault with a weapon and possession of a weapon.

Security footage of the attack showed the assailant slashing at the victim four or five times.

The victim was able to stand and run away after the initial assault, but the assailant pursued him into the Atrium building. It is not clear if they made contact again.

The footage showed the assailant reappearing by the doors. Soon after stepping outside, he was tackled from behind by a security guard.

Armed with only handcuffs, the guard grabbed the assailant's arm before tossing him on the ground. Two guards restrained and handcuffed the suspect.

> **Rest assured it was safe and secure in this area almost immediately.**
> Sgt. Dale Corra

Mike Soberal, who is in charge of the Atrium's security, said he was pleased with the way his security team handled the situation.

"It was executed perfectly," he said.

Sgt. Dale Corra praised the collaboration of citizens and security guards who stayed on scene to talk to police. He said they helped halt what could have been a more serious assault.

"Citizens can rest assured it was safe and secure in this area almost immediately after this incident," he said. "Things came out very well today."

A witness, Terence Yip, tweeted that the black suspect was yelling "F--- white people" before allegedly attacking the victim, who is white. Yip, a CBC employee, said he could not comment when reached by phone.

Police continue to investigate, and the Criminal Investigation Bureau has video to review. Police could not confirm whether the incident was racially motivated. Corra said mental health could be a factor. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

POLICE

Fetus found near deaths scene

A member of the Forensics Investigative Team covers the towel containing a fetus that was found near a recycle bin at the scene of a recent murder-suicide. STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR

Toronto police have ruled out a connection between a fetus discovered near an apartment-building dumpster Wednesday morning and the deaths of a man and his pregnant wife at the same complex days earlier.

Officers had been canvassing the complex, near Bathurst Street and St. Clair Avenue W. since Wednesday's discovery but are treating the incidents as separate investigations, said Const. Victor Kwong.

Kwong declined to say whether a fetus was found in the body of Precious Charbonneau, a 33-year-old who was reportedly nine weeks pregnant when she was found dead outside the apartment building on Sunday.

"We are not commenting on the autopsy," Kwong said.

However, he confirmed the remains found Wednesday were in fact those of a human fetus.

Speaking at the scene, Supt. Scott Baptist said the remains were found on the ground but could not say how long they may have been there.

"We are in a position right now where we are awaiting the arrival of the coroner's office to come and review this," Baptist said. "Our homicide investigators are on scene because of the circumstances of what occurred on Sunday night."

Charbonneau and Robert Giblin, 43, both of Toronto, plunged from the 21st floor of the apartment building Sunday.

Police believe that Charbonneau was stabbed by her husband, a decorated air-force sergeant, before falling from her apartment balcony. Their bodies were discovered close to one another's.

Krista Heier who lives in the building said the series of events is "horrifying," especially so close to Christmas.

"It's unbelievably bad timing," she said. "We don't know what to do now. It is just so messed up."

A friend, she said, heard a bang and later discovered that there was a body outside.

Another woman who lives in a unit a few floors beneath where Charbonneau and Giblin resided said she heard a "muffled scuffle."

"I thought it was two guys having a fight on Bathurst," recalled the woman, who refused to give her name. "This used to be a really nice building. Nothing ever happened here. Quiet. Very quiet."

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Six artists vying to take on new Leslieville mural

ART

New piece 'better be damn good': Councillor

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

One corner of Leslieville will get a new look in the New Year.

Plans are under way to replace the Alexander Muir mural, an iconic neighbourhood wall painting near Queen and Jones.

Six local artists have been selected to submit design proposals for the new mural.

Area residents, business owners and Leslieville Historical Society members will gather in early January to vet the proposals and choose the final design.

"The existing mural is in pretty bad shape," said Brad Daniels, a member of the group working to get the new mural going.

"It is constantly being defaced and tagged by people doing graffiti. It is really sad."

Daniels and other members of the Leslieville BIA tried this summer to come up with the proposal to replace the mural.

But they did it without thoroughly consulting residents, and it sparked controversy.

"People hated it badly," Daniels said.

This time around, people who live in the neighbourhood are getting involved in the process.

The city's StreetART program put the names of about a dozen street artists forward, and the community will continue to provide feedback throughout the process until the final proposal is approved.

The mural at Queen and Jones was inspired by **Alexander Muir,** a longtime Leslieville resident known for writing the song The Maple Leaf Forever in 1867. GILBERT NGABO/METRO

> **This is a signature spot, well known and well loved.**
> Coun. Paula Fletcher

Ward 30 Coun. Paula Fletcher said the competing artists will have to make sure the new painting reflects the vibrancy of Leslieville as well as inspire and foster a stronger sense of community.

"This is a signature spot, well known and well loved," she said. "If something is going to replace that mural, it better be damn good."

ENERGY

Natural gas rate drop approved

Ontarians who use natural gas to heat their homes and fuel appliances will get a break on the price starting in the new year.

The Ontario Energy Board has approved rate decreases for Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc. and Union Gas Ltd. effective Jan. 1, 2016.

The board says typical residential customers with Enbridge who use about 2,200 cubic metres of gas per year will see their bills fall by about $43 next year.

Those with Union Gas who use the same amount will see savings ranging from $47.76 in the north to $49.48 in southern Ontario.

About 58 per cent of Ontario households rely on natural gas for heating.

Mild temperatures across most of eastern Canada and the United States combined with an oversupply have cooled demand for natural gas, sending prices to 14-year lows earlier this month.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Refugee deadline approaches

IMMIGRATION

8,000 Syrians in eight days needed to meet federal target

Michael Woods
Metro | Ottawa

Min. John McCallum says the government will have identified the 10,000 refugees who will be on Canadian soil in the coming months. FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

While many Canadians will soon be sleeping with visions of sugarplums dancing in their heads, hundreds of public servants are working around the clock in pursuit of the federal government's goal to bring 10,000 Syrian refugees here by Dec. 31.

More than 500 public servants — the bulk of them at Canadian government refugee processing centres in Amman, Jordan and Beirut, Lebanon — are working to identify, interview, screen and process the refugees before sending them on government flights bound for Toronto and Montreal.

"The people in the field are working incredibly hard and they've improved their techniques," Immigration Minister John McCallum said Wednesday, back from a visit to Jordan and Lebanon.

"This is something totally new. We've never done anything like this in our history at such speed," he added. "They are doing it as quickly as possible and over the days they are learning to do it smarter and more effectively."

Many of the staff are Canadian Forces members there to help with medical screening and gathering biometric data, such as fingerprints, McCallum said. The two processing centres are now "powerful machines," especially on the medical screening front. Officials are processing 800 medical cases per day in Amman and Beirut combined, McCallum said.

Many staff are immigration department officials who are interviewing resettlement candidates. There are also Canada Border Services Agency officials, foreign affairs representatives, and embassy staff.

Many public servants have relocated from other posts abroad, McCallum said.

"I met people who have come literally from all over the world — from New York, from Hong Kong, from Mexico — to relocate temporarily in this region to help out on this process," he said.

According to the latest federal government numbers, by Wednesday night the government will have resettled 2,167 Syrian refugees in Canada since Nov. 4. Another 19,510 refugee resettlement applications are in progress.

McCallum said the government's goal is still to bring 10,000 refugees to Canada by the end of the year, but he couldn't guarantee it because there were only eight more days to bring some 8,000 refugees into the country.

He said the government will have granted permanent residency to 10,000 refugees, but didn't guarantee that they will all be on Canadian soil by year's end.

However, he said he's "very confident" the government will reach its ultimate goal of bringing 25,000 Syrian refugees here by the end of February.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

OBSTACLES

'Moving heaven and earth'

The federal government may not meet its goal of bringing 10,000 Syrian refugees to Canada by the end of the year, Immigration Minister John McCallum said Wednesday.

"That certainly remains our target, we are working day and night to achieve it. But there are certain factors outside our control," McCallum told reporters during a briefing on the Syrian refugee effort.

Those factors include the weather, and refugees' potential unwillingness to leave on very short notice, McCallum said.

As of Monday, 1,869 Syrian refugees had arrived in Canada since Nov. 4. Another 300 were due to arrive in Montreal Wednesday evening. That means nearly 1,000 refugees per day would need to arrive in Canada between now and Dec. 31 to meet the government's target.

"We are moving heaven and earth to get them here as quickly as we can but to do it in a way that is correct and appropriate and takes due concern for security, medical and other issues," McCallum said. MICHAEL WOODS/METRO

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Marijuana charges remain in limbo

LEGISLATION

Many caught waiting for legalization

While Rose Miranda waits for her April court date to face potential charges of possession for the purpose of trafficking, the 65-year-old retired education assistant can't take cannabis for her arthritis.

Mounties have also banned her from contacting anyone at Phoenix Pain Management Society, the medical marijuana dispensary where she volunteered when she was arrested in Nanaimo, B.C.

"I love Baby Trudeau, but he says, 'We're going to fix this.' When? Meanwhile, I have clients who don't have their medication," Miranda said. "I take care of people who are housebound, people in wheelchairs and people who are poor. They need their medication and right now they can't access it."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has vowed to legalize and regulate marijuana but no timeline is in sight. Meantime, cannabis-related crimes continue to tie up police and court resources, leaving some feeling like they're in legal limbo.

Miranda began using medical marijuana about two years ago, after she said prescription drugs turned her brain into "mush." She began volunteering at Phoenix, primarily to educate seniors about cannabis as a pain-relief option.

Nanaimo RCMP raided three dispensaries on Dec. 1.

"They came in like a SWAT team, guns out, 'Hands up!,' screaming, yelling, terrifying everybody who was in there," said Miranda. THE CANADIAN PRESS

I feel very angry, but defiant, because I know I'm doing the right thing. My conscience is clear. I am not a criminal.
Rose Miranda

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INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Village said 'no' to residential school

No, they said.

When officials came to collect children from Jean Marie River for residential school, residents of the remote village in the Northwest Territories said they'd keep their kids at home.

They decided to build their own school. And now, as Canadians grapple with the legacy of residential schools, Jean Marie River is trying to commemorate the fact it doesn't have to. "Our community saw that it needed to do something different," said Chief Gladys Norwegian. "It was democracy at its finest."

Chief Louis Norwegian in 1952 THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jean Marie River had about 70 people in 1950. That's about the same as now, but there were many more children back then.

Officials explained that kids would have to attend a residential school at Fort Simpson — a long journey by boat or dog team.

Norwegian's father Louis, who was chief, was torn. "Dad really stressed on the importance of our beliefs and values," she recalled. "At the same time, (he) realized there's a dominant society out there, so he really believed we needed to know the ways of the white people for us to survive."

It was the mothers that made up his mind. "When he heard the mothers crying, echoing through the community ... he himself cried," said Norwegian. "To me, that was the driving force."

The chief began talking to officials about Jean Marie River getting its own school. But the options were residential schools or day schools where kids could grab a few days worth of lessons while their parents were in the area to trade.

Not good enough, thought the chief. They put up a schoolhouse and made a deal with anthropologist Teresa Carterette. Books and school materials were shipped over and eventually, teachers came, too.

"It gave us a good, solid base as compared to people that went to residential schools that didn't have a nurturing mother, that didn't have a model of how to become a caring mother," Norwegian said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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INDUSTRY

Mining trying Uber way

At 31, Ian Ball became one of the youngest mining company presidents on Bay Street at McEwen Mining, which operates in four countries. His boss was none other than legendary gold mining magnate Rob McEwen.

A year after being promoted to the top spot, Ball called up the CEO of Abitibi Royalties (Glenn Mullan) "and told him I wanted to replace him," jokes Ball. Today, at 34, Ball has that CEO job and is implementing the ideas that got him there.

Under Ball's leadership, Abitibi launched "The Royalty Search", an online platform where struggling exploration companies and prospectors can submit a property for consideration to have their annual staking costs or property taxes paid for in exchange for a royalty.

Knowing that the mining industry works slowly as it moves from discovery to excavation, Ball insists the sector needs to refine its business model.

"Look at Uber and Airbnb," he says. "They both support market valuations equal or larger than the world's largest gold miners, but don't own anything. ... At their heart, they are royalty companies getting a percentage of a sale. How do you bring that to mining?"

Ian Ball
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

FRANCE SECURITY TIGHTENED AMID HOLIDAY SEASON
French police and a French soldier patrol near a Santa Claus model, in a street in Nice, southeastern France, Wednesday. France's interior minister says the government will tighten security around Christmas, amid continued concerns about potential extremist violence after deadly attacks last month.
LIONEL CIRONNEAU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Following Santa's sleigh gets technical

CHRISTMAS EVE

Hundreds of volunteers set to keep watch across globe

Peterson Air Force base is getting ready for its annual holiday mission — tracking Santa's storybook sleigh ride around the world.

The North American Aerospace Defence Command has been working for weeks to tackle the one-day mission.

Miles of wire, dozens of computers and 157 telephone lines will greet hundreds of volunteers Thursday, The Colorado Springs Gazette reported. Volunteers will be answering calls from an estimated 125,000 children around the globe looking for Santa's whereabouts.

"We keep adding stuff every year," said Staff Sgt. Kyle Kelly after he and a team of airmen taped down phone wires in the call centre Monday.

NORAD's 60th year of tracking Santa involves more than the military. The program is underwritten by contractors who pay for the phones, the computers and the website.

Volunteers will field a growing number of calls from curious kids from outside the United States.

On the bilingual front, NORAD, a partnership between the U.S. and Canada, has a distinct advantage.

"The great thing about having Canadian forces here is they can speak in French," Canadian Maj. Jennifer Stadnyk said.

NORAD is responsible for defending the skies and monitoring the sea approaches for both nations.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

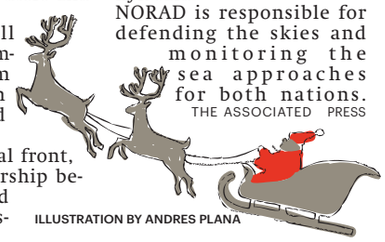

ILLUSTRATION BY ANDRES PLANA

IN BRIEF

Panic over Elf on a Shelf
A New Jersey girl called 911 after she touched her Elf on the Shelf.

Police say seven-year-old Isabelle LaPeruta of Old Bridge was worried because, according to the popular children's book, the magic of Christmas goes away if the elf is touched.

AMAZON.COM

Her mother, Lynanne, says she awoke from a nap to find her daughter trying to shoo an officer out of the house. She says the girl panicked after the elf fell on the floor when she threw a ball. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Door gives trapped man enough space to survive
Squeezed into a narrow room under piles of debris for 67 hours, a 21-year-old man was saved by a door that trapped his foot but gave him space to survive. Rescuers on Wednesday pulled Tian Zeming from the massive mudslide that hit part of Shenzhen — a major manufacturing city in southern China.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Arrests made during protests in Twin Cities
Arrests were made at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport on Wednesday as protesters blocked roads and caused significant traffic delays after they moved from a rally that briefly shut down part of the nation's largest mall. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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metro VIEWS

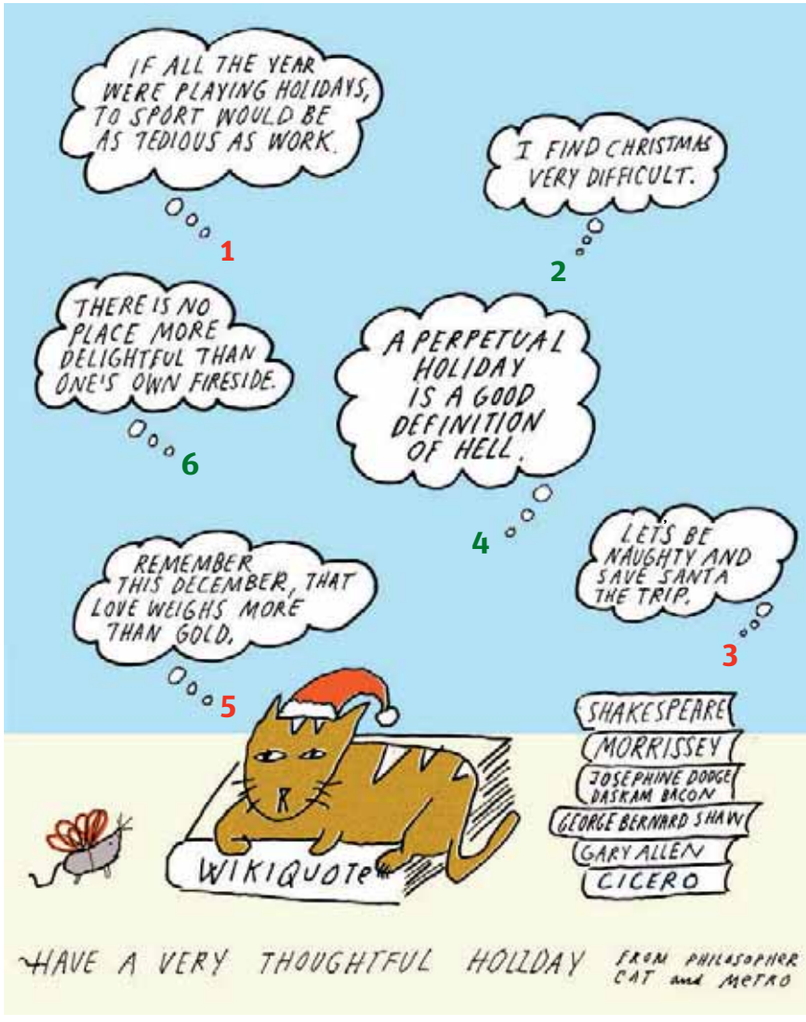
Sweetscience
For the perfect Christmas dinner, says Oxford University gastrophysicist Charles Michel, add a dollop of jam to your gravy.

Your essential daily news

Thursday, December 24, 2015

Are you as smart as Metro's favourite feline philosopher?

Our resident snuggly scholar has collected snippets of the best holiday wisdom for you to ponder as you celebrate the season. See how many quips you can match to their authors. And have a meowy Christmas, happy holidays and a healthy and safe new year.


IF ALL THE YEAR WERE PLAYING HOLIDAYS, TO SPORT WOULD BE AS TEDIOUS AS WORK.
1
I FIND CHRISTMAS VERY DIFFICULT.
2
THERE IS NO PLACE MORE DELIGHTFUL THAN ONE'S OWN FIRESIDE.
6
A PERPETUAL HOLIDAY IS A GOOD DEFINITION OF HELL.
4
LET'S BE NAUGHTY AND SAVE SANTA THE TRIP.
3
REMEMBER THIS DECEMBER, THAT LOVE WEIGHS MORE THAN GOLD.
5
WIKIQUOTE
SHAKESPEARE
MORRISSEY
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Answers

1. Shakespeare
2. Morrissey
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URBAN ETIQUETTE **ELLEN VANSTONE**

There you have it, folks: the biggest gift of all. The golden rule that JC expounded during his all-too-brief career as a motivational speaker and Messiah: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

You may or may not believe in Jesus Christ, but it's hard to argue the man didn't pull off one major miracle: He used a rudimentary form of social media that involved a scattered entourage jotting down tweets on vellum, but more than 2,000 years after his death, his birthday is still an event of global significance.

Admittedly, the manner in which his followers now celebrate the day might give him pause. Overspending on toys and gadgets. Committing the sin of gluttony for days on end. Pretending a fat guy from the North Pole uses levitating caribou to carry out billions of B&E's in one night via outdated home-heating systems. It's a strange way to honour the life of a poverty-stricken prophet who preached love and humility.

But far be it from me to judge.

Because God knows I'd hate to be judged.

And there you have it, folks: the biggest gift of all. The golden rule that JC expounded during his all-too-brief career as a public motivational speaker and Messiah: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Which is pretty much what I've been saying for almost a year in this etiquette column. Not that I'm comparing myself to Jesus Christ. Obviously, that is not for me to say.

What I am saying is that the spirit of Christmas is based on the same principle that is at the core of good manners, i.e., putting the comfort and concerns of others ahead of your own.

These kinds of manners have nothing to do with etiquette per se — it's not about which fork to use with the escargots or how to address a peer should you be invited to brunch with the House of Lords. Those kinds of rules are too often used by the privileged (a.k.a. lucky) to make "lesser" folk feel bad and excluded, which is the opposite of good manners.

What I'm talking about is the kinds of impeccably good manners that are based in love — love for thy neighbours, love for thine own sense of being a decent, moral person.

What could be simpler, right? Be nice to everybody while everybody is also nice to you. If we all embraced it for just one single day, we'd instantly have another miracle: world peace. Good lord, it's so easy a child could understand it!

And yet … It's so hard! (And believe me, it's twice as hard for someone who writes a national etiquette column. The pressure in my personal life not to be a total jerk is considerable.)

It's also hard to buy into the baby-Jesus-peace-and-love message of Christmas when we're drowning in a sea of insidiously sentimental, tinsel-laden, bank-breaking exhortations to buy, buy, buy. Not to mention the stress of pretending to get along with everyone in your crazy family over turkey. Not to also mention the stress of desperately missing your crazy family should you find yourself separated from them this year.

The spirit of Christmas is based on the same principle that is at the core of good manners.

So allow me to suggest a gift-giving idea that anyone can afford, and is firmly on message with the season.

Why not give the gift of good manners, all year long?

Help wrangle a stroller onto the streetcar even when you're frantically late. Be more patient with frazzled store clerks, harried servers and amateur pedestrians who clog up sidewalks or stop dead at the tops of escalators. Talk to the oldest, loneliest person in the room at a party full of otherwise sexy, powerful dynamos. Listen — really listen — to the most annoying relative in your family. Drop your indifference to a neighbour/partner/co-worker you take utterly for granted, and let what they want and feel actually register in some non-judgmental corner of your brain (it may take some looking, but you'll find it).

I guarantee these small but genuinely heroic efforts will bring you a little closer to the peaceful, loving world we all crave, whether you're religious or not.

Good luck.

And Merry Christmas from everyone at Metro!

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MOVIES GOSSIP TELEVISION DIGITAL

Poulter 'pushed to the brink'

INTERVIEW

The Revenant actor finds chaos of shoot rewarding

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

British actor Will Poulter portrays legendary mountain man Jim Bridger in the epic frontier adventure The Revenant. CONTRIBUTED

Stories about The Revenant's rough and tumble shoot have already passed into legend. Harsh filming conditions — it was minus 40 degrees with windchill factor for much of the Alberta shoot — turned the outdoor revenge drama into what one crew member called "a living hell."

One of the film's stars says he was "confused and stressed" during the shoot, but wouldn't have had it any other way.

"It is something that I am only able to analyze and realize in hindsight," says English actor Will Poulter. "I spent the entire experience peppered with these moments of total confusion and emotional stress; in a turmoil. Now I realize that is what I needed to experience. I wouldn't have ever wanted to really gain control because then I wouldn't have been experiencing anything realistic or wouldn't have captured anything we needed. I'm glad for those moments."

The 22-year-old, hot off the success of The Maze Runner and We're the Millers, appears alongside Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hardy in the gritty vengeance drama about fur trapper Hugh Glass, a frontiersman who became a legend when he trekked across harsh country after being left for dead following a brutal bear attack. Poulter plays Jim Bridger, an inexperienced fur trapper caught in an impossible situation — torn between loyalty to Glass, his responsibility to his employers and his moral obligations.

> **"It's an exploration of how much we can take as humans and what motivates us to endure these kinds of conditions.**
> Will Poulter on his latest film The Revenant

"On many occasions (director) Alejandro (Iñárritu) let me be because I was naturally confused and stressed by being pulled in many directions and not knowing what to do. He often thought the most appropriate thing to do was to allow me to be that. I would turn to him and say, 'I don't know what to do here,' and he would say, 'Why are we even having this conversation?' The character doesn't know what's going on, so why should I?"

The Revenant is the cinema of misery: a primal story that puts its characters through their paces.

"I think this movie is about the human spirit and I think what Alejandro strove to achieve was a film that explored what humans are able to endure and what is worth enduring in this kind of experience. Is it family? Is it money? Is it simply the will to live another day in an environment you love and feel safe in? It's an exploration of how much we can take as humans and what motivates us to endure these kinds of conditions."

Poulter says The Revenant is "an emotionally affecting experience," and adds, "there was no creating that without experiencing a lot of the hardships for real." The gruelling outdoor shoot took place on 12 different locations in three different countries including Canada, United States and Argentina from October 2014 to August 2015. Thinking about the shoot Poulter remembers the hard times with pride.

"The moments that stick out most for me are those moments where I felt I was pushed to the brink emotionally and physically but achieving the shot or getting the take. Ending the day was just unbelievable. There are a few of those days that stick out in my mind and that's why it was so rewarding. It's one thing to finish a hard day's (work) and pat one another on the back. It's another thing to finish a day you didn't actually think you could get through and then pat each other on the back."

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The Hateful Eight

Director: Quentin Tarantino
Starring: Samuel L. Jackson, Kurt Russell

Set after the Civil War, a stagecoach hurtles through the wintry Wyoming landscape. The passengers, bounty hunter John Ruth and his fugitive Daisy Domergue, race towards the town of Red Rock.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 85% Audience: 98%

DRAMA

Concussion

Director: Peter Landesman
Starring: Will Smith, Gugu Mbatha-Raw

This dramatic thriller is based on the incredible true David vs. Goliath story of Dr. Bennet Omalu, the brilliant forensic neuropathologist who made the first discovery of CTE, and a sports-related brain trauma in a pro player who fought for the truth to be known.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 58% Audience: 95%

COMEDY

Daddy's Home

Director: Sean Anders
Starring: Will Ferrell, Mark Wahlberg

A mild-mannered radio executive strives to become the best stepdad to his wife's two children, but complications ensue when their freewheeling and freeloading real father arrives, forcing him to compete for the affection of the kids.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 32% Audience: 96%

DRAMA

Joy

Director: David O. Russell
Starring: Jennifer Lawrence, Robert DeNiro

This is the wild story of a family across four generations centered on the girl who becomes the woman who founds a business dynasty and becomes a matriarch in her own right.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 63% Audience: 96%

DRAMA

The Big Short

Director: Adam McKay
Starring: Christian Bale, Steve Carell

When four outsiders saw what the big banks, media and government refused to, the global collapse of the economy, they had an idea: The Big Short. Their bold investment leads them into the dark underbelly of modern banking where they must question everything.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 86% Audience: 98%

DRAMA

The Revenant

Director: Alejandro González Iñárritu
Starring: Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hardy

In an expedition of the uncharted American wilderness, legendary explorer Hugh Glass is brutally attacked by a bear and left for dead by members of his own hunting team. In a quest to survive, Glass endures the unimaginable.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 85% Audience: 99%

DRAMA

Son of Saul

Director: László Nemes
Starring: Géza Röhrig, Levente Molnár

October 1944, Auschwitz-Birkenau. Saul Ausländer is a Hungarian member of the group of Jewish prisoners isolated from the camp and forced to assist the Nazis. While working in one of the crematoriums, Saul discovers the corpse of a boy he believes to be his son.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 92% Audience: 88%

DRAMA/COMEDY

Sisters

Director: Jason Moore
Starring: Tina Fey, Amy Poehler

Two disconnected sisters are summoned home to clean out their childhood bedroom before their parents sell the family house. Looking to recapture their glory days, they throw one final high-school-style party for their classmates,

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 60% Audience: 64%

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7 WAYS JUDD APATOW FIXED FUNNY

Judd Apatow is a millennial Renaissance man. As the director of movies like The 40-Year-Old Virgin and Knocked Up and the producer of such flicks as Superbad, Pineapple Express (above) and Anchorman, Apatow has used his voice to champion a new kind of storytelling in comedy. Here's how:

1. He launched the raunchy comedy. Hollywood execs in the 1990s kept most comedies broad — PG-13 fare aimed at teenage boys. The 40-Year-Old Virgin (2005) was an R-rated film that explored awkward middle age. And we were all the richer for it.

2. He built a bridge between the '90s and today. Apatow got his start working with Garry Shandling, Jim Carrey, Adam Sandler and Ben Stiller — stars that defined 1990s comedy.

3. He rejected the star system. In his own productions, Apatow is known for taking chances with unknown or under-appreciated talents, such as Seth Rogen, Melissa McCarthy and Steve Carell. After working with Carell on Anchorman (2004), he encouraged the Daily Show alumnus to write the story for The 40-Year-Old Virgin.

4. He plays well with others. Apatow encourages collaborative filmmaking, such as on-set improv, which in turn leads to some of the funniest outtakes in the biz.

5. He's a friend to the underdog. Apatow loves subcultures. From the sleepy stoners being chased by drug lords in Pineapple Express to the awkward high-school seniors facing separation anxiety in Superbad, he shows that even losers get lucky sometimes.

6. That's because the journey is half of the fun. In the Apatow-verse, side chatter and witty wordplay get as much airtime as action scenes and gags. It makes relationships between characters feel more real.

7. He knows women are funny. Apatow has provided a platform for strong female performers such as Catherine Keener in The 40-Year-Old Virgin and Leslie Mann in Funny People. He's also nurtured Lena Dunham (Girls), Amy Schumer (Trainwreck) and Kristen Wiig, who co-wrote one of his biggest hits, Bridesmaids.

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Comedy lifts the curtain on Wall Street

INTERVIEW

Anchorman director tackles the financial crisis

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Adam McKay is best known for directing broad comedies with Will Ferrell like Anchorman and Step Brothers. But his new film, The Big Short, is a different beast.

It's the story of how four investment-bankers — played by Christian Bale, Steve Carell, Finn Wittrock and John Magaro — saw the devastating financial meltdown of 2007–10 coming when no one else did. It's a lighthearted look at a dire situation. Call it a dramedy.

"When I read this book it did everything I wanted to see in a movie," he says. "It was funny, it was tragic, and the characters were amazing. I think it was a case of running into one of the great books of the last 20 years that shows what is really going on in our modern world."

McKay knows how to milk a laugh out of a scene but he also knows that the level of understanding the viewer needs to get why the housing bubble burst is above the level of most MBAs.

"It's like 2 + 2 = fish," says one banker, expressing disbelief at the financial manipulations used by the big banks. In the film he takes pains to explain how Wall Street likes to use confusing terms to make you think only they can understand what they do.

"We wanted to be the first Wall Street movie that took you behind the curtain, that really said, All these confusing terms you hear, all the ways the banks make you feel stupid or bored ... it's actually not that hard. If the guy who did Step Brothers can understand it you can too.

"We were trying to show that this thing that half of Wall Street doesn't understand, these derivatives, mortgage backed securities, they're actually pretty easy. They bundled a bunch of mortgages, they sold them, made a ton of money. Then they ran out of good mortgages so they put crappy mortgages in and coerced the ratings agencies to give them AAA. That's it. That's the whole story."

McKay has an a-list cast but he didn't want to make the movie all about the stars.

"It would have been very easy to just do this character story and just show these guys being affected by it but I wanted this thing to bridge a gap. I think there is too much stuff in our society where people just think, 'Ahhh banking! It's boring. Politics! Who cares?' The truth is, this stuff is exciting, It's the language of power. Once you get hooked on it, it gets addictive."

The Big Short is a look at our recent past, but McKay warns this is not a historical drama or cautionary tale, rather it's very much a going concern.

"All the effects of this collapse are still completely in play. All the same questions are still in play and they fixed a few things but they didn't fix the main, weight bearing beam beams that caused this problem. So this is an active story right this second. That is one of the main reasons we made this movie, we want people to understand that. This isn't over."

My goal is that it demystifies this world for some people. That it just takes away that feeling of, like, we're too dumb to understand it.

Director Adam McKay

Christian Bale stars in The Big Short, directed by Adam McKay. Even McKay's big, broad absurdist comedies have germs of subversive ideas embedded in them, but here the director confronts political ideas head-on in a hard-to-pin-down format. CONTRIBUTED

JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

Telefilm so lame you can't even hate-watch

THE SHOW: A Christmas Melody (W/Hallmark)
THE MOMENT: The feel-bad point

Mariah Carey in A Christmas Melody. CONTRIBUTED

Melissa (Mariah Carey), the self-proclaimed "go-to mom for everyone in Silver Falls, Ohio," stands in the wings during an elementary school holiday pageant. She's wearing a snow-white cardigan and pearls. Her high ponytail and makeup are red-carpet-ready. Consumed with jealousy, she stares at someone on stage: the nine-year-old daughter of Kristen (Lacey Chabert).

Kristen was Melissa's arch-rival in high school, and she's recently moved back to town. Before the pageant, Kristen tut-tutted to Melissa, "Someone would have to be heartless to want to upstage a nine-year-old." As Carey tries valiantly to knit her brow we realize, someone is.

Can anyone feel good watching alleged-feel-good holiday telefilms like this one? If so, how?

Budget constraints force their actors to be driving through sunny October leaves one minute and pulling up in "snowy" December Ohio the next. Their dialogue is full of cheesy clunkers like, "You're this amazing wedding dress designer for Butler's department store!" and "You're never too old to believe in Christmas wishes." People must be hate-watching, right? Right???

I tried to liven things up by inventing a drinking game: If Carey ever changed position in her scenes, I would drink. But I stayed thirsty, because in every one, she stood stock-still and recited her dialog without even moving her head.

And when they referred to Kristen and Melissa's high school graduation in 1998 — even though Chabert was born in 1982 and Carey in 1970 — well, it just became a feel-sad movie, and I went to bed.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

HOLIDAY VIEWING

Perfectly sized binge watches

It's the holiday season and for many of us who have just a few days off, time is of the essence. Here are five top-shelf shows you can start and finish before you're back to work in 2016:

Benedict Cumberbatch as Sherlock. CONTRIBUTED

Sherlock
Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman are perfectly cast as Sherlock Holmes and sidekick Dr. Watson. Each of the three seasons currently available on Netflix have three episodes apiece, each no longer than 90 minutes. You can easily devour all of them in time to catch the newest episode, The Abominable Bride, premiering on PBS on New Year's Day. And prepare for a fourth season scheduled to air in 2017.

Peaky Blinders
This British production — starring Cillian Murphy, Sam Neill and Tom Hardy — is set in post-First-World-War Birmingham, England. It centres on the ambitions of a gangster family and a vicious police officer (Neill) bent on their destruction. With only six episodes in its first two seasons, the series will have you begging for more — and you'll be thankful a third season began filming in October.

F is for Family
This new animated series on Netflix is the brainchild of star standup comedian Bill Burr. It's a ribald look at a 1970s-era family that evokes elements of All in the Family and King of the Hill and adds liberal doses of expletives. And because the first season has only six half-hour episodes, it's almost a teaser for future seasons.

The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst
This six-episode true crime documentary first aired in February. Filmmaker Andrew Jarecki became intimately familiar with a notorious multimillionaire and New York City real estate heir, and by the time the series ends your jaw will be taking up temporary residence on the floor. Thehorrors inside Durst's mind will resonate in yours long after you've finished watching.

Black Mirror
If you're looking only to be cheery during the holidays, this BBC-produced show isn't for you. But if you're looking for a fascinating, disturbing, brilliant anthology series touching on technology, the future, satire and humanity's dark places, Black Mirror is right up your alley. Once you're done, you'll understand why Netflix has commissioned a third season (of 12 episodes!). There's nothing like it.

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5 POP CULTURE MOMENTS THAT MADE HEADLINES IN 2015

The worlds of celebrity and pop culture were filled with attention-grabbing moments over the course of 2015, and sometimes enough similar ones — like when doughnut debacles and bad pics take on a life of their own on the Internet — to constitute a troubling trend. Here's what got our attention this year.

NED EHRBAR METRO IN HOLLYWOOD

1 Justin Bieber makes a comeback

In 2014, Justin Bieber was Canada's most hated export. But this year, a pop-culture miracle occurred and he is back on top thanks to excessively apologizing and releasing some actually very good new music. Joining forces with Skrillex and Diplo, Bieber's song What Do You Mean? debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 — that, in addition to two other songs dominating the charts.

2 Taylor Swift's overstuffed squad

Taylor Swift hit the road this year for her 1989 tour and used it as a chance to prove to the world that she knows a lot — and we mean a lot — of famous people (seen here with Selena Gomez), with cameos onstage by the U.S. women's soccer team, Miranda Lambert and Justin Timberlake to name a few. But she wasn't impossible to say no to. Patrick Stewart and Ian McKellan were able to resist her charms. And honestly, Jennifer Lawrence and Amy Schumer dancing on Billy Joel's piano felt much more organic.

3 Amy Schumer's 'last f-able day'

Leave it to comedy's golden girl to bring together the mega-wattage of Tina Fey and Patricia Arquette to toast Julia Louis-Dreyfus' "last f—able day" in the Season 3 premiere of her Comedy Central show. Not only hilarious by nature, it threw astute shade at Hollywood's wild standards for women "of a certain age." Schumer returned the favour later this year, appearing in Fey and Amy Poehler's Bad Blood parody on Saturday Night Live. Double props.

4 The Ballad of Poot Lovato

As much as Demi Lovato might hate it, the fictitious mutant sister that her family has kept locked in the basement was having a major moment in 2015 — a moment that wouldn't end for the beleaguered singer, with Twitter Q&As and Instagram comment sections continually hijacked by snarky fans concerned about Poot's well-being. You can't fight the Internet, Demi.

5 Ariana Grande's doughnut debacle

One way to help make your bubbly young pop-star self seem more relatable? Showing you like to get stoned and skulk around donut shops, maybe even overstepping your bounds and taste-testing a pastry on the counter, as Ariana Grande did in a great moment caught on camera. Not so helpful? Declaring that you "hate America" after being chastised for your intoxicated behaviour.

OH WHAT FUN IT IS TO BE DONE.

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ISTOCK

'Tis the season for giving back

CONDO TRENDS

Many real estate brokers taking part in charity drives

Duncan McAllister
For Metro Canada

This holiday season will hopefully be a little brighter for many people in the GTA, thanks to the efforts of many of Toronto's real estate agents and offices.

Individual brokerages contribute to a wide range of community causes, including granting the wishes of seriously ill children, raising funds for women's shelters, providing winter coats to those in need and sponsoring children in developing countries.

The Toronto Real Estate Board encourages its members each year to support some of the city's several hundred charities. This time last year, TREB members kicked off 2015 by providing grants to 60 different shelter-related charities throughout the GTA.

For seven consecutive years, Greater Toronto Realtors have voted in favour of participating in the Every Realtor campaign, which has allowed TREB to donate $485,410 to the Ontario REALTORS Care Foundation on their behalf.

Scott Hanton and Cameron Weir are brokers with The Weir Team at Keller Williams Advantage Realty. This year they will be donating $10,000 to charity. In an interesting twist, they've decided to let their Facebook followers vote on a particular charity. "There are so many worthy charities that we didn't think it fair to decide ourselves," says Hanton.

"We're hoping that advocates for local charities see this as an opportunity to bring attention to organizations in desperate need of extra funding," he continued. "Any registered charity is eligible, but we're hoping to spawn a grassroots campaign that you often only find on Facebook.

"Since we are doing this as a Facebook poll, the control is really in the hands of users who, by quick and simple online sharing, can elevate their charity to the top fast.... We'll be publishing the standings of the Top 10 charities regularly, so it will be interesting to watch."

The winners will be decided by the end of May.

Toronto's Holiday Helpers is a registered charity whose mission is to provide a one-time personalized Christmas package to low-income families with young children who are trying to improve their circumstances.

One of the volunteers is Lani Fumerton, a Realtor working with a busy and successful team of agents at Re/Max in the east end. Lani is passionate about giving back to the community, and is actively involved in many charitable initiatives including Holiday Helpers, Future Possibilities for Kids and the fundraising committee for the Red Door Shelter.

REAL ESTATE

Everything within reach in Yorkville

Project overview

Minto launches a new residential address in Yorkville for the third time. Rising 25 storeys, the upper suites will have excellent city views while the boutique units on lower floors will overlook the Village of Yorkville Park. Interiors will feature textured stone, and antiqued gold layered throughout.

Location and transit

Located in the centre of Yorkville with a walk score of 100, Yorkville Park offers great convenience at the intersection of Bellair and Cumberland, steps from Bay subway station and nearby Yonge station. It's a quick drive to the Don Valley Parkway connecting to all points north and south.

Building amenities

An outdoor terrace offers seating areas around a full-height fireplace. A spacious indoor entertainment lounge, complete with a chef's catering kitchen, connects to the terrace. Residents will enjoy private workouts in a fully-outfitted 2,000-sq.-ft. fitness centre, including a spin and stretch room.

In the neighbourhood

World-class restaurants abound, like neighbouring Sassafraz along Cumberland and Sotto Sotto on Avenue Road. Nearby is high-fashion retail on Bloor Street West's Mink Mile and Bloor West's cultural corridor for visits to the ROM or the Toronto Royal Conservatory of Music.

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metro SPORTS

‘I think I was already sacked’: Man United manager Louis van Gaal on reports that Jose Mourinho is in line for his job

IN BRIEF

Canada wobbles into WJC

Mitch Marner scored with less than four minutes to go to cap the scoring in a wild third period, and Canada edged Sweden 7-6 Wednesday in its last exhibition match before the world junior hockey championship.

Canada led 5-1 heading into the third, before Sweden lit up Canada goaltender Mason McDonald with five goals over the final 20 minutes.

Canada opens the tournament against the rival U.S. on Saturday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Beckham’s suspension upheld by league

Odell Beckham Jr. is going to have to serve his one-game suspension.

Hearing officer James Thrash on Wednesday upheld the suspension for multiple violations of safety-related playing rules after hearing an appeal by the New York Giants wide receiver earlier in the day.

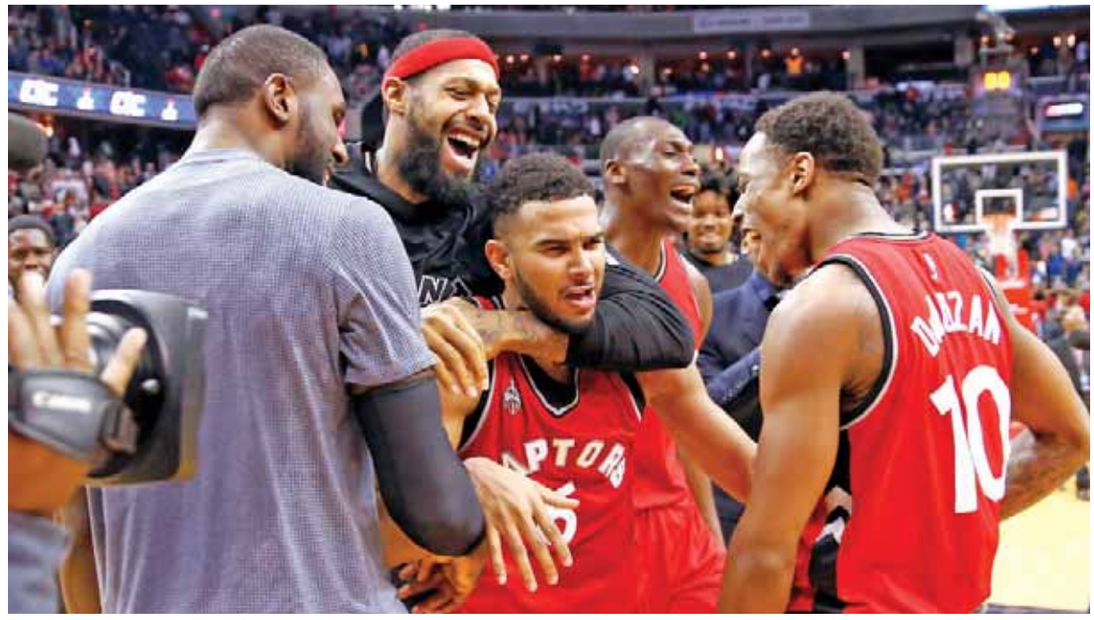
Beckham will miss the game Sunday night at Minnesota. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Odell Beckham Jr.
GETTY IMAGES

Home for Christmas

RAPTORS

Joseph and Bennett excited to spend holiday with family



Raptors point guard Cory Joseph is mobbed by teammates after making a game-winning three-pointer on Nov. 28 in Washington. ALEX BRANDON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It’s been years since Christmas has been an easy thing for Cory Joseph and Anthony Bennett.

The two Toronto-bred, first-year Raptors are enjoying their first holidays in their hometowns as pro players and are looking forward to spending Christmas Day — or at least part of it — with their families.

Anthony Bennett
GETTY IMAGES

The Raptors will fly to Milwaukee in the afternoon Friday, ahead of their Boxing Day matchup with the Bucks.

“I’m super excited just to get to spend it with my family,” Joseph said earlier this week. “First off, I haven’t spent Christmas (in Toronto) with my family in so long. Even when I was in high school I was in Vegas (at Findlay Prep in Henderson, Nev.) and we had a couple of games at Christmastime.

“I haven’t decided what exactly I’m going to do yet, or where I’m going to go, but it’s always special to spend it with family.”

In Joseph’s four seasons with the San Antonio Spurs, he played twice on Christmas Day and opened his rookie season on Boxing Day, thanks to the lockout-shortened season in 2011-12. He brought the holidays to him those first few years.

“When I was in San Antonio ... I’ve got a big family, I could fly them all out there,” he said. “But now everybody is down the street, you know?

“It’s a lot more special and it’s my hometown, so I get to remember all the Christmases I used to have when I was younger.”

.600

The Raptors’ winning percentage with a record of 18-12.

In his previous stops in Cleveland and Minnesota, Bennett was spared playing Christmas Day. In his rookie year with Cleveland he managed to squeeze in a trip home to Toronto. This year, Bennett said he’s focused on family time before heading out to Milwaukee.

A big grin came across his face as he recalled that first Christmas as a pro, and how the quality of gifts increased for his loved ones.

“I did the best I could to give a gift to everybody,” he said. “Everybody liked it at the end of the day and that’s all that matters.”

He gave his 13-year-old nephew his first phone that year.

“He was really excited about that,” Bennett said. “I can’t even remember (the type of phone) honestly, but he loved it.”

While the focus will have to get back to basketball when the Raptors board their flight to Milwaukee, Joseph will still have some Christmas options.

“I’ve got family there,” he said. “My mom’s brother lives in Milwaukee, so I’ll spend it with them too.”

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MARKHAM & LAWRENCE

RECIPE Sweet Potato and Split Pea Soup

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This simple, hearty soup is packed with as much nutrition as it is with comfort factor.

Ready in
Prep time: 1 hour 15 minutes
Serves 6

Ingredients
- 8 1/2 cups water
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 cup dried yellow split peas
- 1 Tbsp freshly grated ginger
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 Tbsp toasted pumpkin seeds

Directions
1. Place a large sauce pan over medium heat and fill with 1/2 cup water and onion, allow to cook until onions are translucent. Add ginger and simmer for 2 minutes. Add remaining 8 cups of water, sweet potato and peas to pot and bring to a boil.
2. After a few minutes, reduce the temperature and cover soup. Allow to simmer for 1 hour, or until the sweet potatoes and tender.
3. In that same bowl, toss your shrimp with the other half of the marinade. When the broccoli has been in the oven for 10 minutes, take out the sheets, turn the broccoli over and add the shrimp evenly across the two sheets. Put it all back in the oven for another 10 minutes.
4. Allow to soup to simmer last 10 minutes uncovered. Working in batches, put soup in a food processor and purée. Garnish with pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds.

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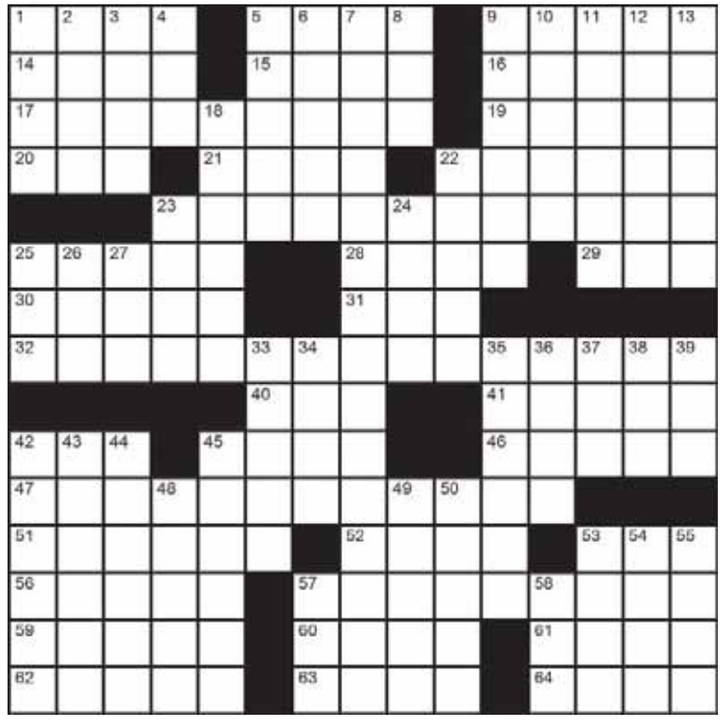
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. "__ Is Christmas": Festive tune by #59-Across
5. Ancient's 1601
9. Monastery boss
14. Comical "Ouches!"
15. Egg: French
16. Bellows
17. The __, "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" (1989) family
19. 'Madame' of chemistry
20. Canuck prov.
21. Carried
22. Brightly-plumed bird
23. "Glory to the newborn King!" exclaimers: 2 wds.
25. Eternal City's ancient inhabitant
28. Lively
29. Socialite's 'born'
30. Moon shape, e.g.
31. Indonesia's __ Islands
32. When many might still be shopping for Christmas gifts: 4 wds.
40. "__ little teapot..."
41. Raised flatlands
42. Sit-ups targets
45. Util. bill
46. Friends, slangly
47. NORAD service monitoring the progress of Rudolph and the gang on Christmas eve: 2 wds.
51. Baking... All-purpose and multigrain
52. Canadian rocker Mr. Kroeger
53. Gunk
56. Decorate
57. "We Three Kings of Orient Are"... "Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying / Sealed in the __-__ tomb."
59. Canadian singer/songwriter Ms. McNeil
60. Canadian actor Mr. Cronyn
61. Tilled
62. Be popular on Twitter
63. Mail org. in The States
64. Hubbubs

DOWN
1. "Is that for here or __ __?" (Fast food query)
2. Highway honker
3. "Don't know __ __ matters, but..."
4. Leaky balloon sound effect
5. Communicating cow
6. __ Falls (High waterfall on Vancouver Island)
7. "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch"... "You're as __ __ __ / You're as charming as an eel..."
8. Perhaps-es
9. Esoteric
10. Old 'town' in France
11. Like the wilderness
12. Baltimore baseball player
13. Dangerous flying bug
18. Wherefrom
22. Bit of drumming in "The Little Drummer Boy": 2 wds.
23. Jumble
24. Pub game prop
25. TV brand
26. Christmas dinner fragment
27. Converged
33. Lively rhythms
34. Canadian's continental neighbour, briefly
35. Hold back
36. Not ever, poetically
37. Employ
38. Dance style
39. 'Count' suffix
42. Of equal quickness: 2 wds.
43. Town in southern Manitoba named after one of Norse deity Odin's sons
44. Alarm clock button
45. Made money
48. Burial shroud city in Italy
49. Eat loudly
50. Surnamesakes of Orson Welles' most famous role
53. Fine
54. Butter substitute
55. Gambler's chances
57. Moo __ pork (Takeout dish)
58. "__-ching!"

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
You need to make a bold decision and choose between one approach or another. The only danger is that your emotions will guide you instead of reason. Think before you act.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
It's not a good time for taking risks, so don't be tempted to gamble, even if the odds are in your favour. Travel plans, too, are likely to be disrupted, so unless you must be on the move it might be wise to stay at home.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You may go over the top if you think you are being cheated out of what you deserve. Before you start firing off accusations make sure you've got the evidence to back them up.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
An emotional looking full moon in your sign over the next 48 hours means you can't trust your feelings. Refuse to get upset no matter the provocation. How you react matters.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Something will disrupt your schedule. But why should that worry you? Relax. Slow down. Take it easy for a while. Save your energy for a time when you can make things happen.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
The current cosmic set-up is more than a little misleading, so don't jump to conclusions and don't launch into a tirade against someone you think does not appreciate you. They'll soon be singing your praises.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Making changes should be easy, but because the current full moon cuts across such an important axis of your chart you must make sure it's what you really want. You won't be able to change back again later.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
There is no point trying to keep feelings to yourself because you won't be able to. Be open about the way that you feel. If you bottle up your emotions they could explode later.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If someone is giving you a hard time, remove yourself from their presence before you do something that will make matters worse. Don't put up with immature behaviour.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Everything that needs to happen will happen when the time is right. Others will be rushing here, there and everywhere in an effort to get on top of things, but you don't have to.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
This is a time more for thinking than for doing, so resist the urge to start something new and instead of wasting time on trivial and frivolous people, spend some quality time with your thoughts.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You may want to end a relationship but first try looking forward and asking yourself if you may later decide that you were too hasty. Full moons can play all sorts of tricks on people.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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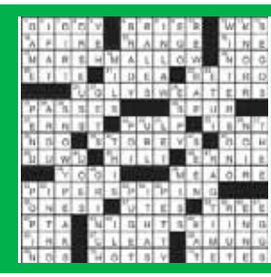

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3	9	8	6	5	1	7	4	2
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